

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel Claims 5 and 6 without prejudice to or waiver of the subject matter contained therein.

Please amend Claims 1 and 11, as follows.

1. (Currently Amended) A sheet folding apparatus for folding a sheet by nipping the sheet taking a predetermined position in a convey direction as a fold and conveying the sheet by means of a pair of folding rollers, wherein at least one of the pair of folding rollers has a single large-diameter portion, provided within a convey range in a sheet width direction of a minimum size sheet foldable in the sheet folding apparatus, and small-diameter portions at both sides of the large-diameter portion, and

wherein a gap formed at the small-diameter ~~portions~~ ~~portion~~ between the pair of folding rollers is smaller than or equal to a thickness of the sheet as folded.

2. (Previously Presented) A sheet folding apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the single large-diameter portion is provided at a sheet convey center portion of the roller.

3. (Previously Presented) A sheet folding apparatus according to claim 2, wherein a width of the single large-diameter portion in the axis direction is substantially $\frac{1}{2}$ of a minimum width of a sheet size foldable in the sheet folding apparatus.

4. (Previously Presented) A sheet folding apparatus according to claim 3, wherein another large-diameter portion of the roller is provided outside a width of a maximum-size sheet foldable in the folding apparatus.

Claims 5 and 6 (Cancelled).

7. (Previously Presented) A sheet folding apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the gap formed between the pair of folding rollers is set smaller than a thickness of the sheet folded in three.

8. (Previously Presented) A sheet folding apparatus according to claim 4, wherein the gap formed between the pair of folding rollers is set smaller than a thickness of the sheet folded in three.

9. (Previously Presented) A sheet folding apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the single large-diameter portion has a taper section.

10. (Previously Presented) A sheet folding apparatus according to claim 8, wherein the large-diameter portion has a taper section.

11. (Currently Amended) An image forming apparatus having image forming means for forming an image on a sheet, sheet conveying means for conveying the sheet

on which the image is formed by said image forming means, and a sheet folding apparatus for folding the conveyed sheet by nipping the sheet taking a predetermined position in a convey direction as a fold and conveying the sheet by means of a pair of folding rollers,

wherein at least one of the pair of folding rollers has a single large-diameter portion, provided within a convey range in a sheet width direction of a minimum size sheet foldable in the sheet folding apparatus, and small-diameter portions at both sides of the large-diameter portion,

wherein a gap formed at the small-diameter ~~portions~~ ~~portion~~ between the pair of folding rollers is smaller than or equal to a thickness of the sheet as folded.

12. (Previously Presented) A sheet folding apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said pair of folding rollers comprise elastic members.

13. (Previously Presented) An image forming apparatus according to claim 11, wherein the single large-diameter portion is provided at a sheet convey center portion of the roller.

14. (Previously Presented) An image forming apparatus according to claim 13, wherein a width of the single large-diameter portion in the axis direction is substantially $\frac{1}{2}$ of a minimum width of a sheet size foldable in the sheet folding apparatus.

15. (Previously Presented) An image forming apparatus according to claim 14, wherein another large-diameter portion of the roller is provided outside a width of a maximum-size sheet foldable in the folding apparatus.

16. (Previously Presented) An image forming apparatus according to claim 11, wherein the gap formed between the pair of folding rollers is set smaller than a thickness of the sheet folded in three.

17. (Previously Presented) An image forming apparatus according to claim 15, wherein the gap formed between the pair of folding rollers is set smaller than a thickness of the sheet folded in three.

18. (Previously Presented) An image forming apparatus according to claim 11, wherein the single large-diameter portion has a taper section.

19. (Previously Presented) An image forming apparatus according to claim 17, wherein the large-diameter portion has a taper section.

20. (Previously Presented) An image forming apparatus according to claim 11, wherein said pair of folding rollers comprise elastic members.